

Fuller Theological Seminary

School of World Mission

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To: David Hubbard

DATE: July 12, 1974

FROM: Ralph Winter

SUBJECT: _____

A snatched comment of yours some weeks ago had to do with what our Fuller Extension program isn't doing. You said (and I agree) that the primary thing that Fuller can offer is an accredited M-Div. degree or possibly an M.A. degree.

Some time after that a fellow connected with the Bakersfield Extension division wandered into my office and began to talk and what he said was so interesting I asked him to back up a little and I would transcribe it. So I did, and the attached two pages are his random comments. There are some very fascinating little bits of data in here, especially about what Ray Stedman is doing at Western Conservative Baptist in Portland, and I thought I would pass this on to you for your interest.

On the needing of lay training, it's just as easy for us in our area to send our people to Bible Study Fellowship or to have the tape ministries of the Multnomah School of the Bible, or out of Calvary Bible's tape libraries or to bring in the Multnomah School of the Bible Lay Institute, which is on a weekend seminar basis, and therefore our people can get very good expository Bible study.

Fuller,

We need our men to have formalized structured training to be able to do the job of ministry.

We asked Fuller to come to us. . . They had never even thought of coming to Bakersfield. The Seattle program is basically geared to give a one-year certificate of lay training to the people in Seattle. There is an opportunity for the individual out of his one year of lay training to be able to use that as a pipeline to then pack his bags and come down to Fuller and become a resident student.

Our program is that we've asked to offer the full MA program in Bakersfield without a student ever having to come down to Fuller. MA in ministries, theology or Christian education, youth work, cross-cultural work.

RDW

Fuller does not regard that as ministerial training, nor call that a ministerial degree. [But some of your people will feel that that's all they need, right?]

We've also brought in a Greek class from the Pacific Seminary, so that our people are beginning to get their Greek, and therefore this will hopefully be able to allow our people to lead on to an M.Div. Right now, we're going for the MA because that's all we can get out of Fuller. Within two years, we hope to have M.Div. availability for us up there in Bakersfield, and with the interest in extension seminary education beginning to expand, like we've heard from Western Conservative Seminary in Portland--there's a group of men, Tim La Hay, David Hocking, Ray Stedman and Marvin Rickert, are in the process of forming a western conservative extension seminary, which will be active starting this fall. And they will have a center in San Jose at Valley Christian Church, at the 1st Brethren Church in Long Beach (that's David Hocking's church-- he was involved with the California Graduate School of Theology, which he has basically pulled out of because of some real ethical problems they're having at that school), then a center at Tim LaHay's Christian Research Center going down there and his high school and Christian college. This will be a basically conservative, independent work. They are going for accreditation; hope to open by this fall. Extension seems to be ex-

panding. Our need up in our area is that we have over 60% of our pastors in Bakersfield that have never been to seminary. These are Bible college graduates. And our only real seminary men come out of the Presbyterian church, out of the Methodist church, most of our American Baptist pastors are not seminary graduates. All of our Christian Churches, there is no one who has seminary training there. Our Disciples of Christ Church now have their seminary training, but they're almost apostate in our area. Our black churches don't have seminary training either.

What should Fuller do? The seminary is best equipped to handle the theological method. The biggest problem that I see--we've had a mini-Reformation with Bible Study Fellowships--of the 200-odd men I taught, we would have between 5 and 12 pastors. In Fresno, they average between 200-300 men once a week for 33 weeks. After five years, they have had a 33-week expository study in Genesis, John, the Pauline Epistles, Matthew, and the minor Prophets. It's really very solid work--all written by Ms. Johnson. I don't think a seminary class should compete with that kind of a class. What there is a need for is structured ministry training. Need leadership training, church discipline, theology. He has Bible knowledge.

[^{this} Could serve as screening ground for ministry?] Bible Study Fellowship is a lay movement that is feeding men into the ministry. It's a natural feeder into extension especially. Every one of our men in extension came out of that feeder group. We were beginning to feel shallow.

80% of the extension students in Seattle are women. The majority of the 80% are ex-Bible Study Fellowship people who have already gone through the five-year program and now are looking for something more.

Average age of Bakersfield group is about 32. 20% of our group are black. From graduate school down to the 8th grade, men and women from 26 to 65. We have Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, independents and Pentecostals.

Fuller program (8 students) has allowed us to have 54 students in an undergraduate program we were able to bring in under Pacific, since Pacific is undergraduate, they allow those of us in the Fuller graduate program to teach. We've been able to take our Fuller courses, bring them down to a Pacific level and open up a whole package of Christian education in our community to such a degree that the community college came to us last week asking if we would teach Bible in their classrooms.